

# Congress of the United States

## Washington, D.C.

October 19, 2020

Margaret Everson  
Counselor to the Secretary  
Exercising the Delegated Authority of the Director, National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Everson,

We write on behalf of students and families in our districts to request that the National Park Service extend the 2019-2020 Every Kid Outdoors pass into the 2020-2021 school year in order to ensure this valuable opportunity to foster a lifelong connection with America's public lands is not hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since 2015, the Department of the Interior has offered fourth graders and their families free entrance to all federally managed public land through the Every Kid Outdoors Program. Congress authorized the program with the bipartisan passage of the Every Kid Outdoors Act in 2019. However, the onset of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has presented another hurdle for students and families to accessing America's public lands, waters, and historic sites.

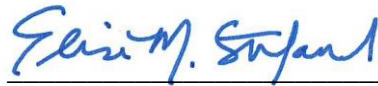
State and local governments across the country have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by implementing stay-at-home orders, encouraging only essential travel, and closing parks, significantly reducing family outings. Further, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) supported physical distancing standards and limiting outdoor recreation to parks and areas that are close to home. Students and families adhering to the federal, state, and local guidance may not have been able to fully utilize their 2019-2020 Every Kid Outdoors pass, which expired on August 31st, 2020.

The outdoor recreation industry has been severely impacted by park closures and social distancing requirements. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 75 percent of small businesses in the outdoor recreation industry are reporting significant, negative effects due to the pandemic. This is 31 percent more than the national average.

Therefore, we request a swift and thorough consideration of a full year extension of the pass so that students and their families can continue to explore the rich natural and cultural history on display in our public lands. By increasing flexibility of the Every Kid Outdoors pass into the next year, millions of students and their families can continue to enjoy outdoor recreation and help this vital sector of the U.S. economy recover from COVID-19.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



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Elise M. Stefanik  
Member of Congress

Steve Stivers  
Member of Congress

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Will Hurd  
Member of Congress

Jim Hagedorn  
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Bruce Westerman  
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Brian Mast  
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Marcy Kaptur  
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